



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Thursday, January 8, 2009**

**09-001**

## **OREGON MAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT FOR SELLING WALRUS IVORY**

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen announced that on January 7, 2009, James E. Schneider, a resident of Astoria, Oregon, was sentenced to a term of three years probation, and a fine of \$10,000 for illegally selling walrus ivory to undercover U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agents, in violation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Schneider was ordered to pay the \$10,000 fine within the three-year probationary term as well as to abandon other walrus ivory he illegally possessed.

Schneider, age 47, plead guilty to these offenses in October 2008. Sentenced was imposed by United States District Court Judge Ralph. R. Beistline.

According to the information presented to the court at the sentencing hearing by Assistant United States Attorney Steven E. Skrocki, Schneider planned to act as a retail seller of illegal ivory by acquiring, possessing and selling walrus parts. Schneider planned to sell the ivory in Oregon; however, his plan was thwarted by an undercover investigation conducted by USFWS. The crime is a violation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, a law which prohibits non-Alaskan Natives from possessing raw walrus ivory that has not been handcrafted by Alaskan Natives.

During the proceedings, it was noted that Schneider was convicted of a felony by the State of Alaska for importing alcohol into Togiak, a dry village. Schneider used some of that alcohol and cash to illegally purchase walrus ivory.

U.S. Attorney Cohen stated, “The protection of our precious wildlife resources is a high priority of this Office. We will continue to pursue violators in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Alaska State Troopers and the Alaska Attorney General’s Office.”

“This case is an excellent example where state and federal law enforcement agencies, working together, were able to stop actions that threatened the health and welfare of the citizens of Alaska and federally protected wildlife.” said Stan Pruszenski, Special Agent in Charge of the USFWS.

The USFWS, with assistance of the Alaska State Troopers Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team and Division of Wildlife Troopers, conducted the investigation that led to the prosecution of Schneider.

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